

Message Text

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S E C R E T COPENHAGEN 3402

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SA, RH WA, TZ, XA
SUBJECT: NORDIC INTEREST IN SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS

REF: A. DAR ES SALAAM 2256 (B) COPENHAGEN 1848

1. REF A ADDRESSES A QUESTION PARALLEL TO ONE WE RAISED
IN OUR ANNUAL ASSESSMENT (REF B - C.3.B(3)): THAT IS:
THE USE OF THE NORDIC CONNECTION AS A FORUM FOR US
VIEWS ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN QUESTIONS. IN THE PAST, WE
HAVE RECEIVED INDICATIONS FROM THE DANES THAT THE NORDICS
WISHED TO AVOID THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR INTRA-AREA
INSTITUTIONS AS A FORUM FOR "OUTSIDE" REPRESENTATIONS.
THIS SEEMED PARTICULARLY TO IMPLY A DESIRE TO KEEP
THESE INSTITUTIONS CLEAR OF CONFLICTING US-SOVIET
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REPRESENTATIONS AND PRESSURES.

2. THERE HAS BEEN CONCERN THAT THE "NORDIC BALANCE",
ESPECIALLY THE SOMEWHAT DELEGATE POSITION OF FIN-
LAND, MIGHT BE UPSET. THE NORDIC INSTITUTIONS
COLLECTIVELY ARE SEEN TO PROVIDE THE FINNS WITH ONE
OF THE LIMITED NUMBER OF INSTRUMENTALITIES AVAILABLE

TO THEM AS A STRUCTURAL LINK WITH THE WEST.

3. HAVING SAID THIS, HOWEVER, IT WOULD APPEAR FROM HERE THAT THE FORMAT FOR THE SEMI-ANNUAL NORDIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETINGS--THE NEXT SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 1-2 IN HELSINKI--IS BECOMING BROADER AND MORE FLEXIBLE. IN A RECENT DISCUSSION, THE WORKING-LEVEL MFA OFFICIAL DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DANISH PREPARATION FOR THESE MEETINGS, NIELS HELSKOV, MADE THIS POINT.

4. HELSKOV SAID THAT ORIGINALLY THE AGENDA OF SUCH MEETINGS WAS GENERALLY RESTRICTED TO ITEMS WHICH WOULD BE ADDRESSED IN TERMS OF NORDIC UN POLICY. THIS AGENDA HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN EXPANDING. FOR EXAMPLE, AT THE REYKJAVIK MEETING IN MARCH, DETENTE, MBFR AND CSCE QUESTIONS, INTER ALIA, WERE DISCUSSED. IN RESPONSE TO A THEORETICAL QUESTION WE POSED, HELSKOV REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD ADDRESSED SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED BY THIRD COUNTRIES FOR CONSIDERATION IN THIS FORUM. HIS INITIAL REACTION, HOWEVER, WAS THAT SUCH A COURSE WOULD APPEAR TO BE THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE. (THE PERIODIC MEETINGS OF THE NORDIC FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTER ARE HELD, HELSKOV POINT OUT, OUTSIDE THE "NORDIC COUNCIL" FRAMEWORK ITSELF.)

5. IF THE DEPARTMENT JUDGES THAT IT MAY BE USEFUL TO BEGIN A MORE FORMAL DIALOGUE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA VIA NORDIC INSTITUTIONS, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE
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APPROPRIATE FIRST STEP MIGHT BE TO INSTRUCT US EMBASSIES IN THE NORDIC CAPITALS TO EXPLORE THE ISSUE DISCREETLY WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE FOREIGN MINISTRIES.

6. BEYOND THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN QUESTION ITSELF, IT MAY WELL BE THE RIGHT TIME FOR THE USG TO TAKE A NEW LOOK AT THE NORDIC INSTITUTIONS AS POSSIBLE VEHICLES FOR OTHER US REPRESENTATIONS. THIS WOULD PRESUMABLY INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF WHERE THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE TODAY AND WHAT MAY HAPPEN TO THEM IN THE FUTURE. WE, IN FACT, HAVE GIVEN CONSIDERATION TO SUCH AN EXAMINATION OURSELVES SINCE 1977 MARKS THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL, PRIMARILY AS THE RESULT OF DANISH INITIATIVES. THE DANES, AT LEAST UNDER THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, SAY THEY WANT TO GIVE MORE WEIGHT TO THE NORDIC CONNECTION AS THEY SEE THE EC TITLTING INEVITABLY SOUTHWARD AS NEW MEDITERRANEAN MEMBERS ARE ADMITTED.

7. LAYING THE SCOPE AND SENSITIVITY OF SUCH AN EXAMINATION ALONGSIDE THE TRADITIONAL SUMMER HABITS OF HOST FOREIGN MINISTRIES--AS WELL AS THE TURNOVERS AND SUMMER, STAFFING PATTERNS IN OUR OWN EMBASSIES--IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER A NEW LOOK AT THE PROGNOSTICATION FOR THE NORTH COULD BE CONDUCTED BEFORE SEPTEMBER.

8. IN ADDITION TO THE VIEWS OF THE DEPARTMENT AND OUR COLLEAGUES IN OTHER EMBASSIES ON THE SPECIFIC SOUTHERN AFRICAN QUESTION, WE WOULD ALSO WELCOME THOUGHTS ON THE CONSIDERATIONS RAISED IN PARAS FIVE AND SIX.
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